

## Logistical Considerations for Hosting School-based COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics for Students

Vaccination against COVID-19 is a key prevention strategy as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has been approved for use in children, adolescents and adults 5 years and older. Additionally, other COVID-19 vaccines approved in the United States for those 18 years and older (Moderna and Johnson & Johnson/Janssen) are conducting studies in children and adolescents and may seek approval for use of their vaccines in children and adolescents once those studies are completed. Eventually the goal is to test and approve COVID-19 vaccine use in all school age children and even younger (6 months to 4 years).

Vaccinating both school staff and students is an important component of a layered infection control and mitigation strategy. Now that vaccines are approved for younger students, school districts may reconsider their role in coordinating with a local vaccinator to facilitate COVID-19 vaccinations among eligible students and disseminating COVID-19 vaccination information to families. It is recommended you work with your local health authority, insurance carrier, and legal counsel in determining to what degree your district implements this mitigation measure.

Whereas hosting school-located vaccination clinics for older adolescents and school staff might have been feasible for some school districts, vaccinating younger students presents different challenges. The DHS is encouraging more primary care health practitioners such as pediatricians and medical clinics to become vaccinators. Surveys indicate parents may prefer to have younger children vaccinated by their primary care provider. Yet, school-located clinics may be a desirable option for communities. School located vaccination clinics provide convenience and access for families.

The CDC provides resources for school districts including this webpage [Considerations for Planning School-Located Vaccination Clinics](#). The DPI [COVID-19 School Health Services webpage](#) contains numerous other vaccine related resources. The DHS has created a sample school administrator email to parents and guardians along with other resources targeted to this younger student population. The sample email with resources are at the end of this document.

Local and tribal public health officials have been coordinating vaccination efforts in their communities. School districts should continue to work with their local/tribal public health department (LPHD) on vaccination planning if districts determine to host such clinics on site or promote student vaccinations via other methods. Besides hosting vaccination clinics or directing students and families to established vaccinators, another way to facilitate vaccination of students is to provide public health messaging regarding vaccinations. Materials and resources that encourage vaccination and address vaccine confidence can be found on the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) COVID-19 Vaccine Partner webpage: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-resources.htm>

There are a variety of avenues for providing vaccine to the student population. Your LPHD can help you connect with approved vaccinators, or the health department itself may have the capacity to conduct a school-based vaccination clinic. As with educator vaccinations, **the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) does not recommend that school districts apply to the DHS to become [vaccinators](#) for COVID-19 due to the specialized planning and requirements surrounding COVID-19 vaccinations.**

School districts may have experience with hosting other student vaccination clinics such as those for influenza or Tdap vaccination. Planning for a vaccination clinic during the COVID-19 pandemic requires several additional considerations. For a complete vaccination clinic planning checklist, view the '[Planning a COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic Checklist](#)' found on the DHS COVID-19 Partner Resources webpage. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also has guidance for those planning vaccination clinics held at satellite locations, temporary clinics or those held on off-site locations: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/mass-clinic-activities/index.html>

In addition to the DHS and CDC guidance, DPI has highlighted specific logistical areas for school districts to address if they are considering **partnering** with a local vaccinator, and **hosting** COVID-19 vaccination clinics onsite for students. The list is not exhaustive. First and foremost, it is critical to **work with a local vaccinator** in all aspects of the clinic and clearly define roles and responsibilities.

**1. Coordination with vaccinator & event planning**

- The enrolled COVID-19 vaccinator will be responsible to order doses for students/families/staff who have not been vaccinated but wish to receive the vaccine at the school-based clinic.
- The local vaccinator will, at a minimum, assume the role of supporting all clinical aspects of clinic including providing the clinical staff and administering the vaccine to students.
- Set up date and time of clinic(s) based on individual district factors such school calendar, testing, community events, etc. Note Pfizer vaccine requires that second dose be given three weeks (21 days) after the first dose. If the second dose will occur during any school break, work with the vaccinator to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose clinic at the school and ensure families are informed of the clinic hours during the summer.
  - Consider planning school student clinics on Thursday/Friday or followed by 1-2 days of planned leave to reduce unexpected student absences.
- Determine if only students will be vaccinated or if family members and unvaccinated school staff may participate in this clinic.
- Determine if parents be required to be present or allowed to be present if interested.

**2. Parent/Caregiver/Student vaccine education to promote understanding and vaccine acceptance**

- Vaccine hesitancy may be due to a number of different factors, not just a lack of knowledge about the vaccine. It is important to acknowledge there is historical trauma in certain parts of communities that impacts individual's trust in medical systems. Plan the educational outreach with a sensitivity to history and experiences of your school community members.
- School districts can help promote vaccination by providing timely, accurate information in all of the languages commonly spoken by students and their families. The following resources and talking points can help districts spread the word about the safety and benefits of getting vaccinated against COVID-19.

- Emphasize the immediate benefits of getting vaccinated within the school space and beyond.
  - Getting vaccinated will help keep you, your family, and your community healthy and safe.
  - The vaccines are safe and are extraordinarily effective at protecting you from COVID-19.
  - Vaccines are an essential tool to help us move past this pandemic.
  - Getting vaccinated helps stop variants from spreading and prolonging the pandemic.
  - By getting vaccinated, you can help your school get back to normal faster, returning to all the school activities we love.
  - Vaccines are free to everyone. You do not need an ID or insurance to receive a vaccine.
- Promote vaccine safety.
  - DHS [partner resources](#)
    - ❖ [Vaccines for COVID-19](#)
    - ❖ [COVID-19 Vaccine Safety](#)
    - ❖ [How Our Bodies Respond to the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
    - ❖ [How are COVID-19 Vaccines Authorized](#)
    - ❖ [COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
    - ❖ [Available COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- Additional CDC resources for schools:
  - School-Located Vaccination Clinics: Best Practices for School Districts A Guide for School District Administrators  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/planning/school-located-clinics/best-practices.html>
  - How Schools Can Support COVID-19 Vaccination:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/toolkits/schools-childcare.html>
  - Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html>
  - COVID-19 Vaccination for Children 5-11 Years Olds  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/planning/children.html>
  - COVID-19 Vaccine for Children and Teens  
[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fvaccines%2Frecommendations%2Fadolescents.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fvaccines%2Frecommendations%2Fadolescents.html)

### 3. Advertising the event

- Communicate with awareness and sensitivity to vaccine hesitancy and historical traumas. Ensure messages are culturally appropriate and relevant to the school community.

- Develop flyers, school email notifications, and direct mailings in language of students' families.
  - Clearly communicate who can get the vaccine (just students, students and their families, etc.) and use methods that reach the targeted audience.
  - Clearly communicate where and how to access vaccination.
  - Clearly communicate that the vaccine is free for everyone and you do not need an ID or insurance to get the vaccine.
  - Clearly communicate what students can expect during vaccination (e.g. will need to wait for 15-30 minutes after vaccination, if will need to wear a mask while in the vaccination site, will they be pulled from class if held during school hours).

#### **4. Paperwork for those receiving vaccine**

- Distribute and collect consent forms for student vaccination. School districts are encouraged to collaborate with the vaccinator regarding their consent forms and/or their local health department regarding COVID-19 consent forms through the Division of Public Health (DPH).
- EUA Fact Sheets, VAERS, v-safe fliers, dose card with lot number/expiration date etc. Collaborate with the vaccinator regarding where to find these resources.
- Reminder to keep personal information confidential (don't post picture of front of card with personal information on social media).

#### **5. PPE and other supplies**

- Collaborate with the vaccinator to identify if they will be providing PPE for any school staff assisting the vaccination effort.
- Collaborate with the vaccinator to ensure all sharps and biohazard material are properly disposed.

#### **6. Record keeping after dose**

- As part of the enrolled vaccinator's agreement with the DHS, the vaccinator is responsible to maintain records of all individuals they vaccinate. The vaccinator is also responsible to document all vaccinations in the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR).
- Identify if the district/school health services will also keep a record of which students received a vaccine at the school-based clinic.
- Consider student health legal/privacy concerns with documentation.
- Address confidentiality concerns of who is seen at clinic with students and staff.

#### **7. Risk of adverse reactions (severe reaction generally occurs 15-30 minutes post dose)**

- Work with the vaccinator to ensure there is adequate spacing for indoor or parking lot in-car observation (if hosting drive up clinic).
- Work with the vaccinator to understand how they will track the post-vaccination observation period.
- Understand whether or not the vaccinator will provide emergency epinephrine and other medical supplies in the event of an adverse reaction.

- Review the 'Planning a COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic Checklist' for additional guidance on how to plan for vaccination monitoring, adverse reactions, etc.

#### 8. School liability/professional liability/equity issues

- Review the school nurse (RN) job description – identify if district liability insurance cover the activities the staff will perform during the clinic.
- If volunteers are asked to assist at clinic, identify if the district liability insurance covers their involvement in the clinic.
- Determine how the school will verify credibility of the consent forms received by families.
- Address how will the ability to sign consents and make clinic appointments via chosen scheduling system affects equity and access.
- Coordinate with LPHDs as they use DPH's guidance for LPHDs in establishing vaccination clinics in schools.
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#### Sample School administrator email to parents and guardians

##### Subject: COVID-19 Vaccination for Your Children

Dear Parents and Guardians:

*[Insert school district/school name]* is committed to the safety of our students, their families, and our staff. COVID-19 continues to cause us to change the way we educate your children as we take steps and work to maintain a productive, healthy school environment.

While we have all had to change the way we live, one thing that has not changed is the importance of vaccination and its role in keeping children healthy.

Now that children ages 5-11 years are eligible to receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, we have a new opportunity to protect more students from COVID-19 illness while reducing the spread of COVID-19 among their families and school.

Getting your child vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself, your family, and your community from COVID-19.

All available COVID-19 vaccines are **free**. All people, children and adults alike, are able to get a free COVID-19 vaccine whether they have insurance or not.

Similar to the other available COVID-19 vaccines, the recently approved Pfizer vaccine for children ages 5-11 years is **safe with minimal side effects**. The FDA and CDC have monitoring systems in place to ensure that any safety concerns continue to be identified and evaluated in a timely manner. In addition, there is no evidence of long-term side effects. Vaccine data throughout history show that all serious side effects, if any, show up within two months of vaccination, not years later. Short term side effects are very minimal and only last a few days. **More than 8.2 million children and youth in the U.S. between age 12 and 19 have already safely received at least one vaccine dose.**

The Pfizer pediatric vaccine is also **highly effective against severe illness, hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19, including from the Delta variant**. COVID-19, particularly the Delta variant, can have a serious impact on your child's health. Infection with the Delta variant has resulted in nearly three times the number of youths in the hospital in the U.S. since early summer. Children who get COVID-19 often still experience long-term symptoms like dizziness, tiredness, or loss of taste or smell for several months. They are also at risk of multi-system inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), which can develop after being infected with COVID-19.

I want to encourage you to consider COVID-19 vaccination for your children. Below are a number of resources available for parents and guardians.

### Resources for Parent and Guardians

- [COVID-19 Resources for Parents and Guardians](#) (DHS webpage)
- [COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens](#) (CDC webpage)
- [Factsheet: What Parents and Guardians Should Know](#)
- [The Science Behind COVID-19: Parent FAQs](#) (American Academy of Pediatrics)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Checklist for Kids Age 5 and Up](#) (American Academy of Pediatrics)
- [Pfizer EUA Fact Sheet](#), for parents and guardians to read before vaccinating their children
- There are also resources on **vaccine safety** available in multiple languages on the [DHS COVID-19 vaccine resources page](#).
- **Find Pfizer vaccine locations** using [Vaccines.gov](#) or by calling 211. [Vaccines.gov](#) is available in English and Spanish.
- For the latest information on Wisconsin's COVID-19 response, please visit the [DHS COVID-19 webpage](#).

*[Insert any vaccination events, conversations, or additional supports your school is providing to help parents learn or support vaccination]*

Supporting your child's COVID-19 vaccination is an important step in the fighting the virus. It is a significant factor in protecting our *[Insert school district/school name]* community and ensuring the best path forward for our students and families.

Thank you for taking this step to keep our children, schools, and communities safe.

Thank you!

(Name)

*For questions about this document or for assistance in locating more information contact DPI School Nurse/Health Services Consultant, Louise Wilson at [louise.wilson@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:louise.wilson@dpi.wi.gov)*